

Release 2001/07/26
10 APRIL 1965

0300020074-5

Allen Dulles completes a non-secret mission

He is first of new resident fellows at Harvard Business School who will give students a short break from professional studies. Leaders in law, religion, and the arts will follow

For three hectic days last week, former Central Intelligence Agency Director Allen W. Dulles turned informer as he genially submitted to a series of grillings by Harvard Business School students.

His sojourn on the campus inaugurated a residency fellowship organized by the students to bring a whiff of outside air into their 100% business environment. Under the program, leaders in government, law, religion, and art will be invited to an intensive three-day round of talks, seminars, and tours. "Our curriculum makes such contact virtually impossible," says one student. "You simply don't have time."

For Dulles, they found the time. Nearly 800 students filled an auditorium to hear Dulles reminisce about his more than 50 years in public life. Another 300 crowded into six informal seminars where Dulles candidly—but within national security limits—commented on everything from James Bond ("I've read them all") to the CIA's role in the Bay of Pigs invasion.

Long days. In between, he spoke to students and faculty at luncheons and dinners, attended—and in one case, took over—classes, toured the library, strolled leisurely on the campus and, after days of 8 to 13 hours of activity, tumbled into bed in the home of Dean George P. Baker. But the 72-year-old Dulles loved the pace. Puffing on his omnipresent pipe, he said he was "intrigued by my invitation and thoroughly enjoying myself."

For Dulles, the visit served two purposes. As he explained to his largest gathering: "If any of us old codgers have anything to contribute to the coming leaders of the free world, now is the time to do it. Not when we are in the grave." It also gave him an opportunity to clear up some misconceptions about the CIA.

To innumerable questions about the best-selling former CIA director, Dulles answered them all. The Invisible Government, by David

Wise and Thomas B. Ross (Random House), Dulles patiently pointed out that CIA gathers intelligence, becomes operational only upon a mandate from top government officials and never sets policy. He said he "won't even bother pointing out all the errors in that book."

Students' work. Most of the planning for the visit was the work of two second year students, John Allen, who spent last summer lining up a resident, and Peter Gerber, who organized the program. The program was officially worked out by the school's Inter-Club Council, which consists of representatives of each of the eight clubs devoted to one aspect of the Business School curriculum, such as marketing, finance, or international business. The council plans to invite three resident fellows each year.

Dulles' stay was spiced with good humor and he enjoyed telling stories on himself. "In 1917, when I was a young diplomat in Berne, Switzerland," he told one group, "I was invited by a friend to visit Zurich, where a little bearded fellow with a new philosophy was having open house. I declined because I had a tennis date. Later, I found out the bearded philosopher was Lenin."

Even his most sensitive experiences could be viewed with a chuckle. "Castro was another bearded fellow I didn't get to meet—but that was not entirely my fault."

Spying made easy. The students also received some expert instruction in spying. Said Dulles wryly: "America is a marvelous country in which to spy, but there isn't much need to do it now. Just pick up Aviation Week, get the annual budget of the Defense Department, or subscribe to Congressional documents and know what you are reading. You can get most of what you want."

For his part, the students found the visit equally rewarding. One

student, referring to the school's case method of teaching, described Dulles as "a big case study of a successful leader." Another remarked that "Dulles is bringing about some rapport between business and government." (In his many discussions of the U-2 incident, Dulles had hailed the cooperation between the government and business—Lockheed Aircraft Corp., the manufacturer of the plane—as "on the highest level in maintaining secrecy.")

The best. Dulles and the students agreed that the informal seminars were the most valuable. Says Dulles: "Sometimes the going was hard. We had some quite heated arguments. But it was very instructional for me." Summing up for the students, one said: "In the Business School we're wrapped in a pretty tightly enclosed world. You really need a jolt into the outside world. And Dulles is giving us that jolt."

For his three days of hard work, Dulles received two paintings of the Business School and an engraved scrapbook to be filled with photographs of his stay. In turn, Dulles gave the Business School Library the 27 volume Warren Commission report, autographed by the seven members, including himself.